

**Los Angeles County  
Regional Park and Open Space District  
Consideration of Lease  
between  
Whittier and Matrix  
and Whittier Oil Field Project**

## **Voters Approve Proposition A in 1992**

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- ✦ Establishes Regional Park and Open Space District
- ✦ Designates Board of Supervisors as the Governing Body
- ✦ Empowers District to take all actions necessary and desirable to carry out the purpose of Proposition A
- ✦ Allocates \$540 million to fund land acquisition
- ✦ Annual assessment, not to exceed \$12.52 per single-family detached residence located on a medium-sized lot
- ✦ Requires a Project Agreement for each funded activity

# Proposition A Accomplishments

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- ✦ Funds open space and park acquisition
  - 809 parcels acquired between 1992 and 2013
  - Resulting in nearly 21,000 acres for open space, wildlife habitat, and recreation

# Proposition A Accomplishments

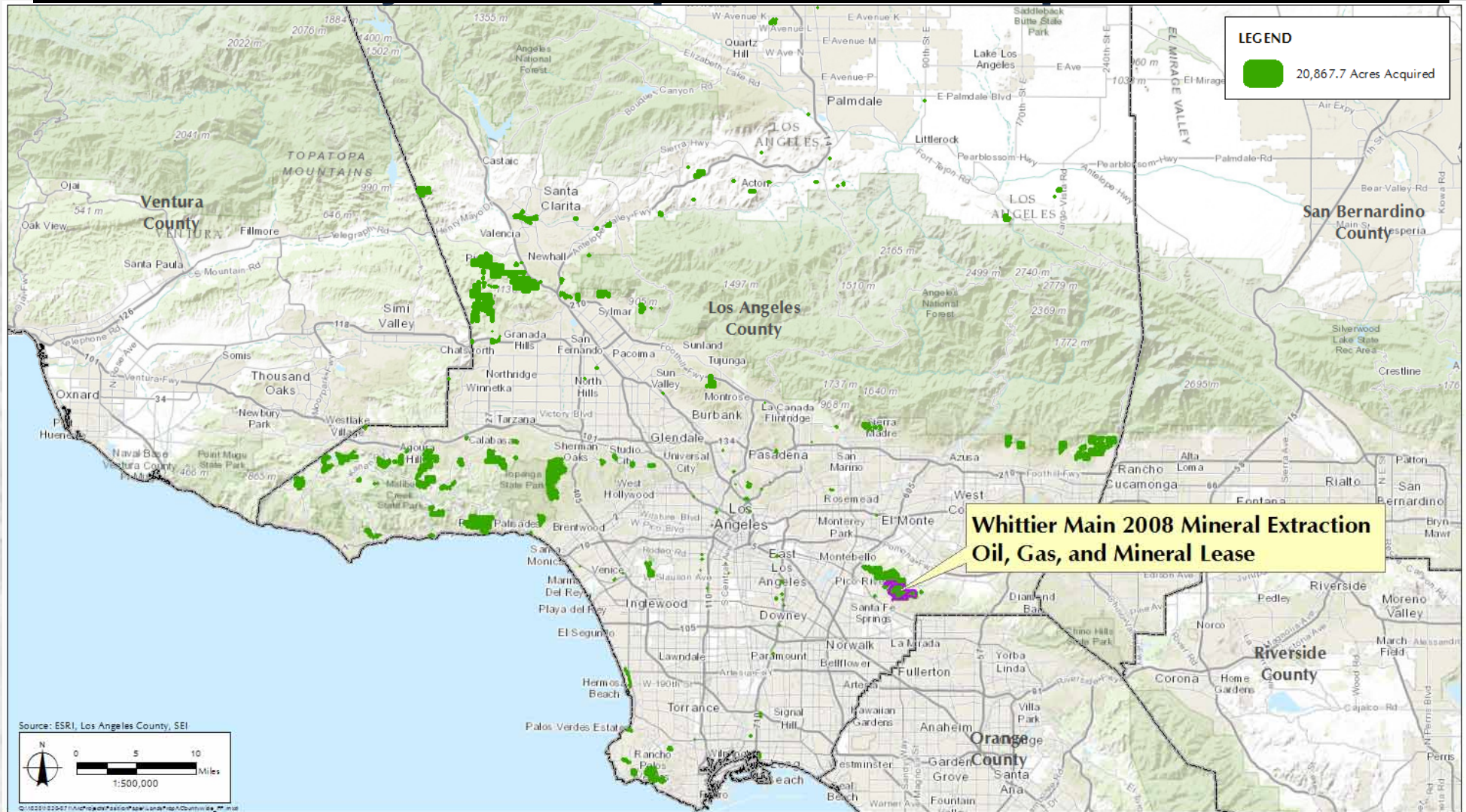
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## ✧ Benefits of Assessment

- Increased attractiveness as result of preservation of mountains, foothills, and canyons, and increased public access
- Improved environmental quality by protecting irreplaceable open space lands and improved public access
- Improved recreational opportunities through improvements such as parks, trails, and other public recreational facilities



# Countywide Proposition A Acquisition Lands



# Proposition A Requirements

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## **Project Agreement Requirements of Grantees:**

- ✦ Certification that lands will be managed consistent with Proposition A funding
- ✦ Commitment to obtain prior District approval of all land use changes, including disposition of lands
- ✦ Agreement to obtain prior District approval of all leases



# Proposition A Requirements

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## **Project Agreement Requirements of Grantees:**

- ✦ No private use of property different from those generally attached to the public, without prior District approval
- ✦ Acknowledgement that all revenue generated from non-Proposition A uses be directed to Proposition A uses
- ✦ Provide assurance to comply with Proposition A Procedural Guidelines

## Whittier Hills Property Chevron Tract

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- ✦ Lands acquired with \$9.3 million in Proposition A funds
  - Chevron Tract (approx. 960 acres) and one parcel of Shannon Tract (approx. 20 acres)
  - 1995 TPL sells land to MRCA
  - 1995 MRCA purchases and conveys land to Whittier
  - 1995 Deed Restriction limits use of 600 acres to conservation and habitat preservation in perpetuity

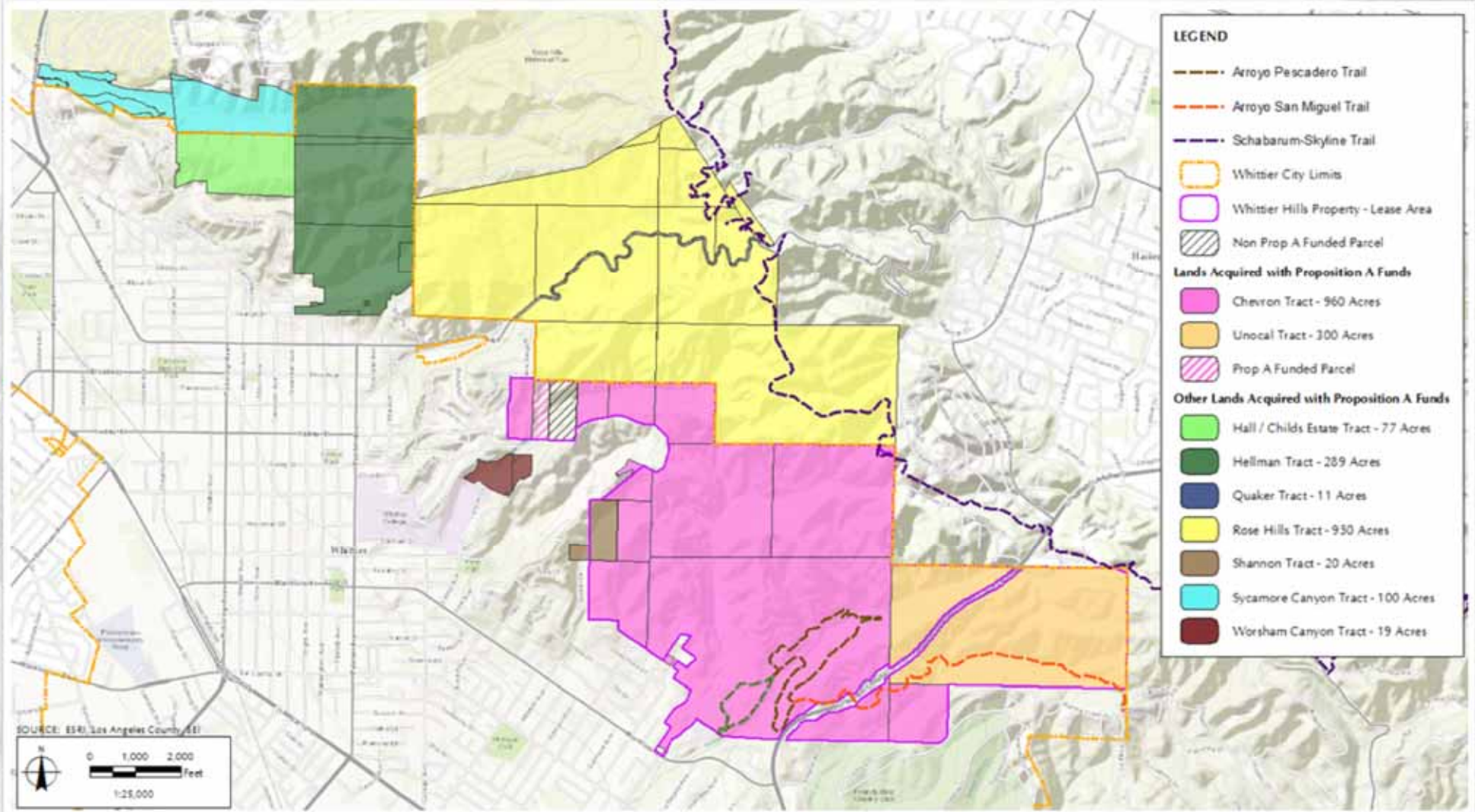


## Whittier Hills Property Unocal Tract

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- ✦ Lands acquired with \$9.3 million in Proposition A funds
  - Unocal Tract (approx. 300 acres)
    - 1995 Whittier acquisition of lands from TPL
    - 1996 Deed Restriction restricts land use exclusively for public open space and recreation space in perpetuity

# Whittier Hills Property



## Whittier 2008 Oil and Gas Lease

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- ✦ Provides right to conduct drilling operations on the over 1,280-acre Whittier Hills property subject to CUP issued by Whittier
- ✦ Authorizes construction and maintenance of pipelines, utilities, tanks, machinery, appliances, buildings, and other structures



## **Whittier 2008 Oil and Gas Lease**

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- ✦ Right to drill until “fully drilled” subject only to:
  - 1) CUP approval by Whittier
  - 2) Whittier’s approval of additional well sites
- ✦ Lease may be amended by Whittier to extend beyond 25 years
- ✦ Lease originally required District approval before operations could begin
  - May 2012: Whittier amended lease to remove requirement for District approval

# **Whittier Hills Property: Whittier EIR Significant and Unavoidable Impacts**

- ✦ Air Quality
- ✦ Aesthetics
- ✦ Hydrology and Water Quality
- ✦ Land Use and Planning
- ✦ Recreation

# Whittier Hills Property: Significant and Unavoidable Impacts

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## Aesthetics

- ✦ 130-foot-tall drilling rigs are visible within 21.4% of Whittier Hills Property
- ✦ Production wells are visible within 12.8% of Whittier Hills Property
- ✦ Future drilling allowed under Lease could be visible within up to 98% of Whittier Hills Property

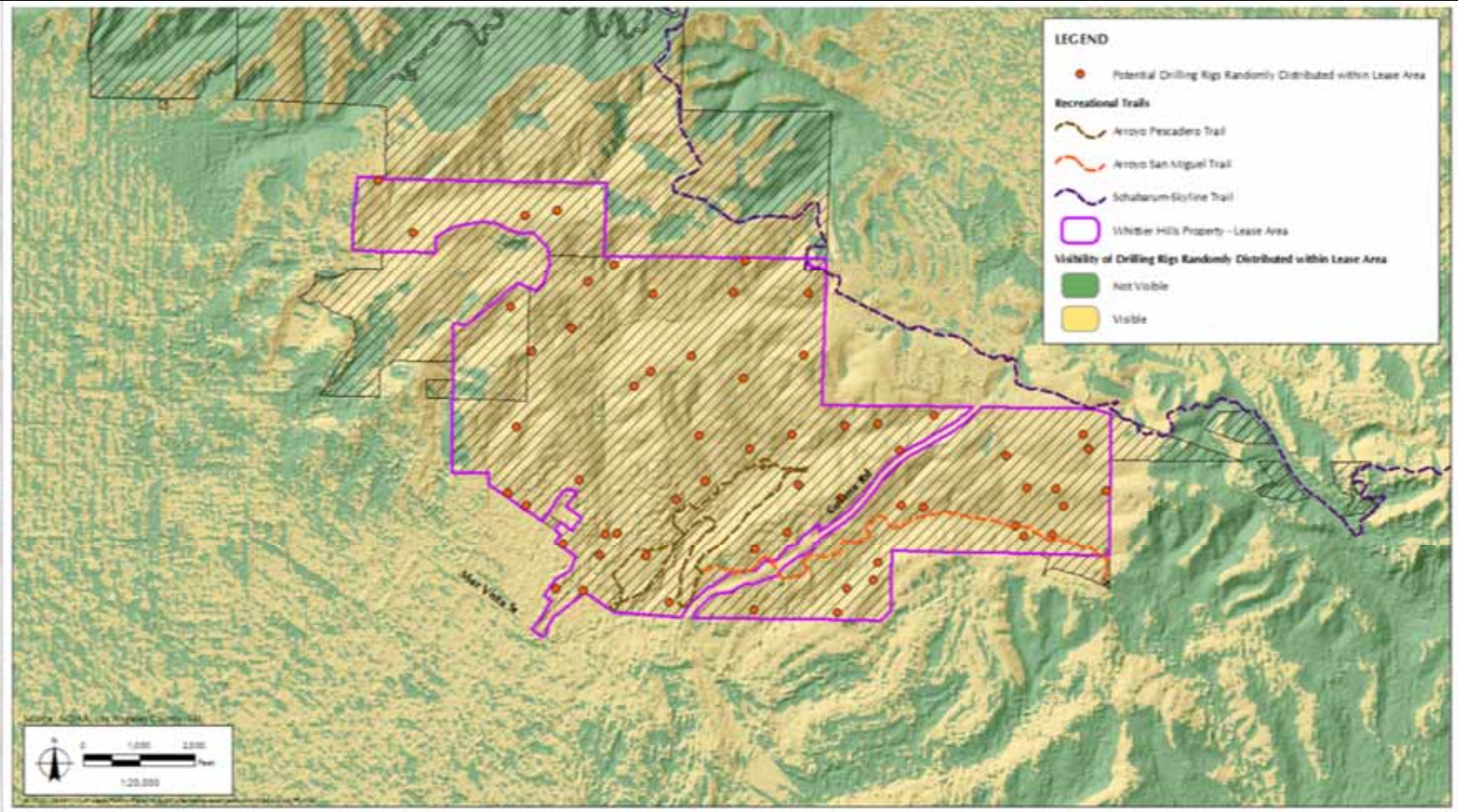


## FEIR Photo Simulation from Deer Loop Trail

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# Significant and Unavoidable Impacts – Aesthetics and Visual Resources – Drilling Rigs Randomly Distributed within Lease Area





# **Whittier Hills Property: Significant and Unavoidable Impacts**

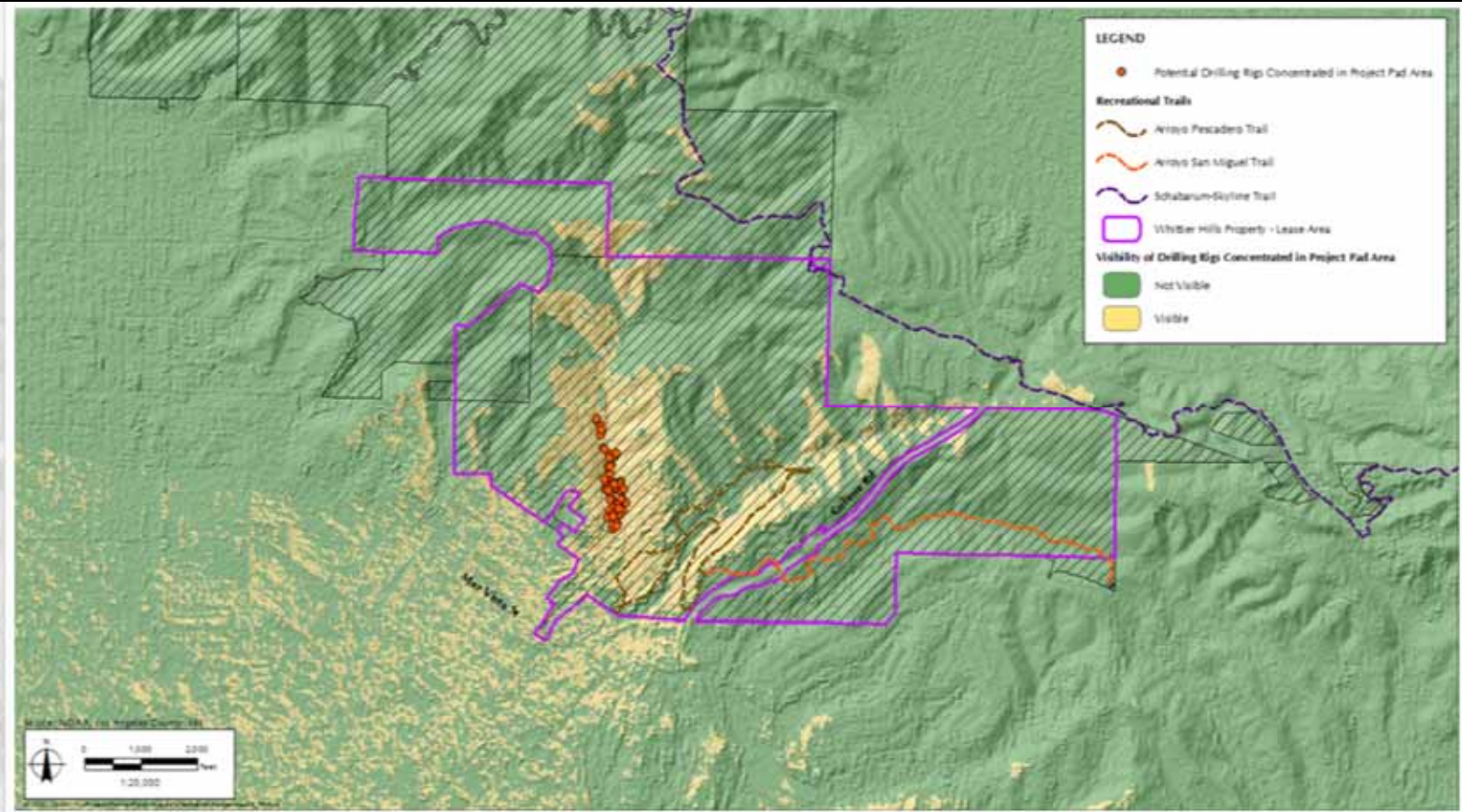
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## **Land Use and Planning**

- ❖ Inconsistent with intended purpose of Proposition A
- ❖ Violates underlying Chevron and Unocal Tract Deed Restrictions
- ❖ Conflicts with proposed designation of Whittier Hills Property as part of proposed San Gabriel Unit of Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area
- ❖ Significant and unavoidable impact to recreation based on views of Project-related equipment



# Significant and Unavoidable Impacts – Aesthetics and Visual Resources – Drilling Rigs Concentrated in Project Pad Area



# Whittier Hills Property: Significant and Unavoidable Impacts

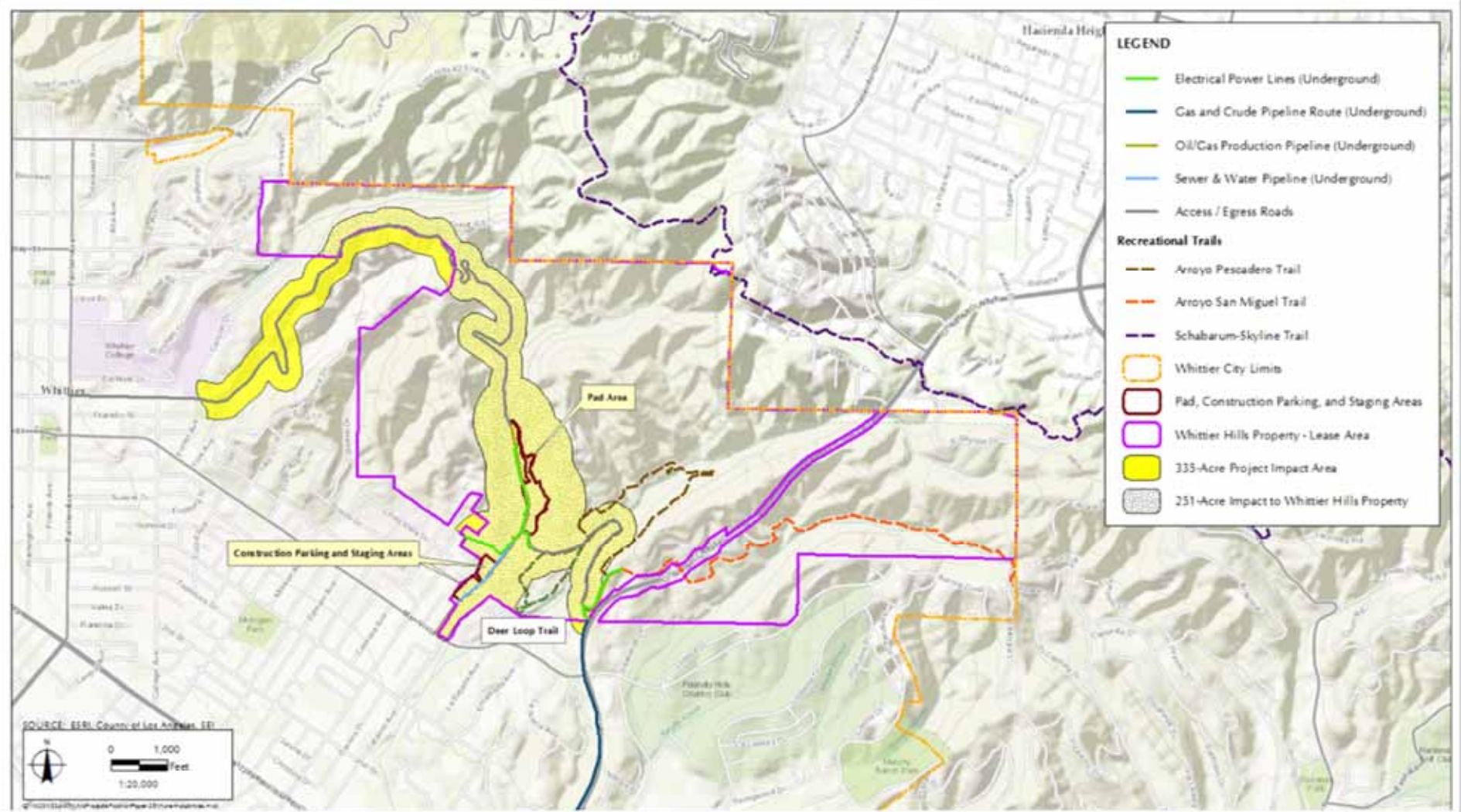
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## Recreation

- ✦ Changes visual character of area from open space to industrial
- ✦ Project will strongly contrast with the surrounding environment and significantly impacts public viewsheds
- ✦ Oil exploration and development activities are visible from trails
  - Arroyo Pescadero (Deer Loop) Trail
  - Schabarum-Skyline Trail
  - Arroyo San Miguel Trail could be closed up to 8 years



# 251-Acre Impact to Whittier Hills Property





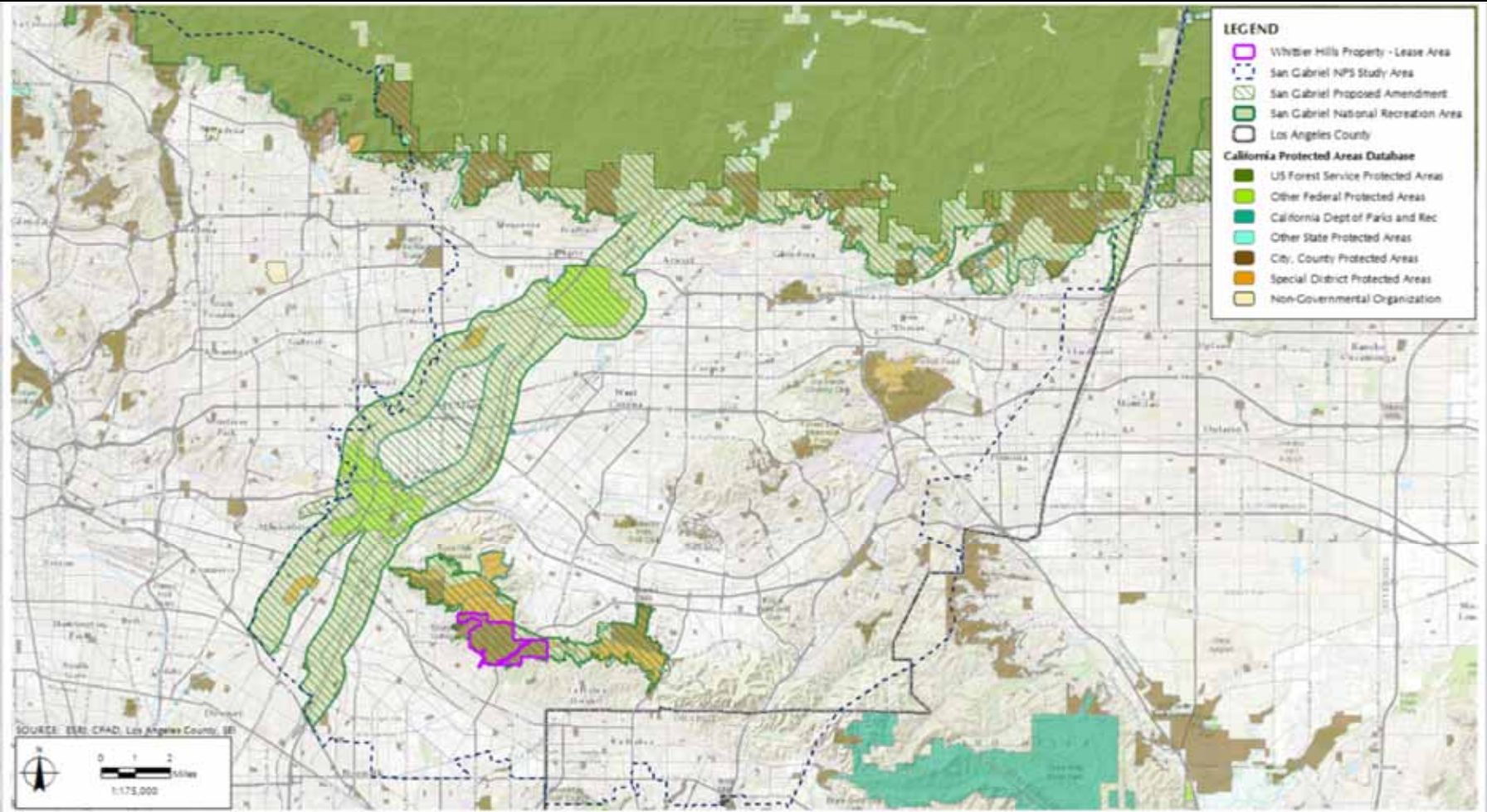
# **Open Space, Habitat, and Recreation Values of Whittier Hills Property**

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## **Proposed San Gabriel Unit of Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area**

- ✧ 54,631- acre San Gabriel Unit Amendment to the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area
- ✧ 100% of 1,280-acre Whittier Hills Property determined eligible
- ✧ Whittier Hills Property characterized as:
  - “Containing outstanding examples of Southern California native ecological communities, particularly coastal sage scrub.”

# San Gabriel Unit of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area



# **Impacts to Open Space, Habitat, and Recreation Values of Whittier Hills Property**

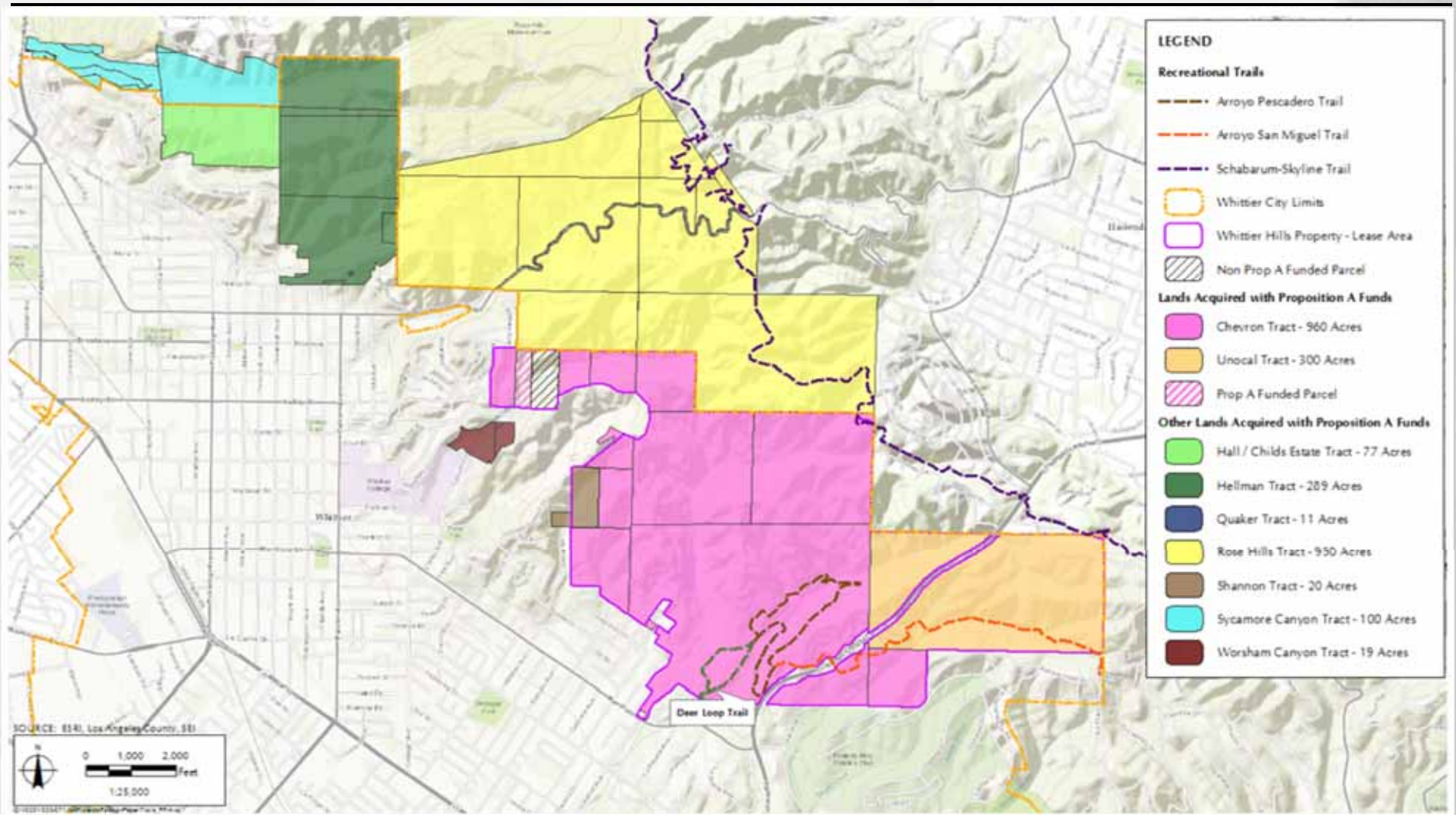
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## **Recreational Resources**

- ✦ County-designated Schabarum-Skyline Trail
- ✦ Arroyo Pescadero Trail (including Deer Loop)
  - Trail used as access road for EIR Project
  - Subject to closure during construction of EIR Project elements
  - Oil exploration and production area visible from trail
- ✦ Arroyo San Miguel Trail



# Recreational Resources





## **Approval of Lease and Project Would Set a Dangerous Precedent and Compromise Public Trust**

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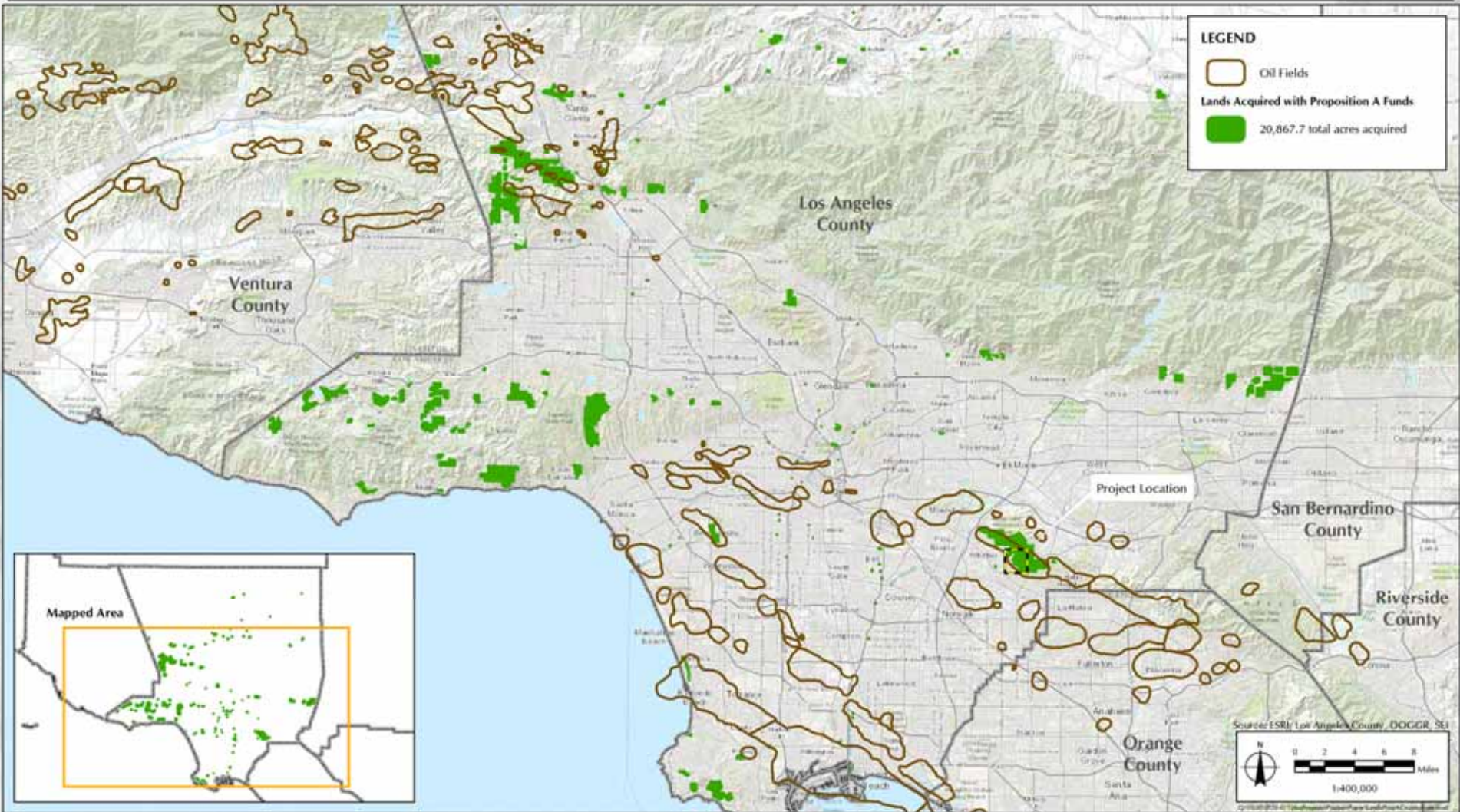
- ✦ Generates suspicion on the part of voters to approve future park and open space bonds or propositions
- ✦ Jeopardizes existing conserved Proposition A lands in the County

## **Approval of Lease and Project Would Set a Dangerous Precedent and Compromise Public Trust**

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- ✦ Oil fields located in or adjacent to approximately 10 percent of lands acquired with funds made available with Proposition A funds
- ✦ Oil field exploration and development results in significant and unavoidable impacts to environmental resources
- ✦ Oil field exploration and development is incompatible with wildlife, recreation, and open space land uses that are core values of Proposition A

## Proposition A Lands Near Oil Fields





## **Recommended Board Action on Lease and Project**

### Denial of Lease and Projects:

- ✧ Maintains over 1,280 acres acquired with Proposition A funds as open space, wildlife habitat, and recreation
- ✧ Consistent with intended purpose of Proposition A
- ✧ Consistent with underlying Deed Restrictions
- ✧ Avoids significant and unavoidable impacts to air quality, aesthetics, hydrology and water quality, land use, and planning and creation



## **Recommended Board Action on Lease and Project**

### Denial of Lease and Projects:

- ✦ Provides continued protection to designated critical habitat for Coastal California Gnatcatcher
- ✦ Preserves eligibility for listing as part of the proposed San Gabriel Unit of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area
- ✦ Consistent with benefits and policies in Proposition A and Public Resources Code section 5539